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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 590
By McDaniel

A RESOLUTION to honor Mr. Charlie Nagatani on the celebration
of his 45th year in Country Music.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those persons whose lifelong contributions to the country music industry have earned them the universal respect and admiration they so richly deserve; and

WHEREAS, for 45 remarkable years Mr. Charlie Nagatani has mesmerized audiences with his unique singing style that has endeared him to fans throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, born in 1936 in Kumamoto, Japan, Charlie was presented with a "live country and western band" as his 20th birthday gift by a friend; he immediately fell in love with country music and joined the band as a singer; and

WHEREAS, in 1961, Charlie returned to his hometown of Kumamoto to form his own band, "The Western Cannon Balls," which performed at U.S. military clubs in Japan, Okinawa, Taiwan, Guam, the Philippines and Thailand until the end of the Vietnam War; and

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WHEREAS, in 1976, he held his 20th Anniversary show in the Kumamoto Civic Hall. He and his band also toured the United States for several months performing in Kentucky, Ohio, and Kansas. Upon his return to Kumamoto, he opened a country music saloon named "Good Time Charlie's" so he could share his love of country music with Japanese people. He entertains in the club seven nights a week all year long with his band; and

WHEREAS, Charlie celebrated his 25th anniversary in country music in 1980 with another concert at the Kumamoto Civic Hall, and later celebrated his 30th anniversary with his first performance on the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, in 1989, Charlie organized the first and only country music festival in Japan; the event was entitled "Country Gold" and was a tremendous success, attracting nearly 8,000 fans; and

WHEREAS, Charlie Nagatani's 35th Anniversary Celebration was held in 1990 at the Kumamoto Civic Hall and later that year he appeared on "Hee Haw." He and his band were invited to perform at Duelin' Dalton's Saloon in Missoula, Montana, as a "friendship exchange" between Montana State and the Kumamoto prefecture who are "sister states"; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, Charlie appeared on "Nashville Now," on the Nashville network and a year later he returned to Nashville to record his first album. Friends joining Charlie on this project included Emmylou Harris, Bill Monroe, Porter Wagoner, and the Osborne Brothers. The album also features a song that tells the story of Charlie's life. While in Nashville, Charlie appeared on Entertainment Tonight, Crook & Chase, CBS Talk of the Town, Nashville Now, Ernest Tubb Midnight Jamboree and the Grand Ole Opry, his fourth trip to the hallowed hall; and

WHEREAS, Charlie has coordinated and performed at the Annual Country Gold Festival and the Country Heart Festival, held at the base of Mt. Fuji in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Fujinomiya City which attracted 10,000 country music fans; and

WHEREAS, he performed at the "Texas Live" festival in San Antonio in 1993, during Fiesta Week. San Antonio and Kumamoto are "sister cities". He also began hosting a monthly country radio show for NHK-FM and a weekly country radio show for FMK Radio; and

WHEREAS, Charlie organized the first Country Sunshine concert in Kumamoto in 1994, an event that is now held each spring at the Kumamoto Civic Hall and has featured such stars as the Dixie Chicks, Danni Leigh and others; and

WHEREAS, RKK-TV in Kumamoto honored Charlie in 1995 by filming a documentary of his life, including his 40 years in country music; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, he opened for Steve Wariner at Billy Bob's, and for the Dixie Chicks at the Caravan of Dreams in Fort Worth as part of the "Sun and Star 1996" celebration, a cultural exchange between Japan and the state of Texas; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, Charlie and his band performed for four days at the annual "Fiesta Week" event held in San Antonio. The Mayor of Kumamoto joined him for this cultural exchange between the two sister cities; and

WHEREAS, Charlie made his ninth appearance on the Grand Ole Opry in June, 1999, and on May 20th of this year, he will appear for the tenth time on the hallowed Opry stage; and he has been honored by thirty-one states as an honorary citizen and also as a Kentucky Colonel; and

WHEREAS, The Annual Country Gold Concert is held in the fall of each year at Aspecta in Kumamoto and is still the only country music festival in all of Japan. Since the first event in 1989, over 60 of America's top country music artists, their bands, television crews and journalists have traveled to Kumamoto for this one-day event which now draws 30,000 fans. The eleventh annual festival was held in October of 1999; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, Charlie was honored with the CMA International Promoter/Buyer of the Year Award, and the prestigious Mansfield Award named for Mike Mansfield. In May, 1999, Charlie and his wife, Toshika, were invited to attend a State Dinner at the White House with

President Clinton and the First Lady. In March, 2000, he was presented the Cultural Award from the Kumamoto Prefectural Government; and

WHEREAS, to his credit, Charlie has never disbanded "The Western Cannon Balls," whose members have performed with him for more than 30 years; Charlie's band has the longest history of any band in existence in Japan; and

WHEREAS, Charlie works exclusively with Refugee Management International in Nashville, in coordinating and promoting his events. Refugee also serves as Charlie's agent in the United States; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud this inimitable gentleman for his dedication to the profession he so dearly loves; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby honor Mr. Charlie Nagatani on the celebration of his 45th year in country music, and extend to this ambassador of music our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation to Mr. Nagatani with this final clause omitted from such copy.